(b) if so, to whom such powers have been delegated for signing such licences;

(c) whether such delegation of power was done with the approval of Central Government;

(d) if so, the details of the Gazette Notification, number and the date of issue; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) to (e) The Office of Drugs Controller General of India receives a large number of applications for issue of import licences. The Drug Controller is the designated licensing authoity. Keeping in view the need to expedite the processing of such approvals and for the purpose of administrative convenience, the work of signing import licences after taking approval of the Drug Controller on file was entrusted for sometime to a senior officer under the control of Drug Controller. This practice has since been discontinued.

Payment of Subsidy

* 92. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have slashed the annual payment of subsidy *to some* of the defaulting fertilizer firms in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SURESH P. PRABHU): (a) Subsidy outgo under the Retention Price-cum-Subsidy Scheme has been reduced by an interim reassessment of capacity given effect to from 1-4-2000.

(b) The interim reassessment carried out w.e.f 1.4.2000 has resulted in upward revision in the assessed level of production of high

capacity urea units and will result in reduction of outgo of subsidy which is estimated as Rs. 450 crore. This, however, is only an interim arrangement. Final reassessment of capacities of urea units will be carried out after receipt of Dr. Y.K. Alagh Committee's report and Government's decision thereon.

Opening of National Ayurvedic Hospital

† * 93. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased, to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open National Ayurvedic Hospitals in order to promote Ayurvedic *system* of medicines and to arouse more trust of people therein;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of places where Ayurvedic Hospitals are proposed to be opened first; and

(d) the amount expected to be spent on this work?

THE MINISTER OFHEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR):(a) to (d) Health is a State subject. The concerned State Governments establish hospitals for Ayurveda depending upon their inter se priorities and the availability of resources. Presently, 1965 Ayurvedic hospitals have been established by the State Government and 82 by the local bodies.

The Central Government establishes national level institutes and centres of excellence depending on the overall need, availablity of resources and likely benefit to the general public. A national Institute of Ayurveda has already been established at Jaipur which has a 180 bedded hospital attached to ix. Other possibilities are presently at the stage of conceptualization, keeping in mind the range of priorities for developing and propagating Ayurveda.

† Original notice of the question was received in *Hindi.*